

From: Josh Glover
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 4:20pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Josh Glover, and I am a Computer Science student at The College of William and Mary in Virginia.

I feel strongly that Microsoft, in its current incarnation, is bad for the computer industry, higher education, and technology in general. The strongarm tactics of the Microsoft Corporation have kept advancements in technology from becoming available to the public, and made the simple act of trying to run a network or write a webpage a nightmare.

What I mean by this is, Microsoft's implementations of many of the RFC-based standards have been decidedly non-standard. In the "best case", they add extensions that people come to depend on, thus making the standards seem inferior. This would not be such a bad thing (one could argue that it is technological Darwinism), except for Microsoft's apparent disdain of many standards-making bodies. In the worst cases (and MIT's Kerberos Project leaps to mind), Microsoft's implementations of standard protocols are **incompatible** with the actual standards, effectively disallowing standards-based communication. The Internet is only possible through a set of standard protocols, and if Microsoft is allowed to continue in its current behaviour, it could actually gain control of the Internet itself.

Microsoft hurts the consumer in the same way, by effectively taking away the choice of the consumer. When I recently bought a laptop computer from Dell, I was forced to pay several hundred dollars for bundled Microsoft software (the operating system and the Works "productivity" software) that I did not want and have never removed from the shrink-wrap. Even worse, I cannot legally sell this software to anyone else, due to licensing. This type of "Microsoft tax" alone should make it obvious that Microsoft is a monopoly.

Also, Microsoft's goals are to strengthen its monopoly, not to provide a service. In a free market, the best products should theoretically win. But when a giant company controls a sector of the market and is actively branching out, as in Microsoft's case, good products are stifled and the consumer loses. In the very specific case of the software market, Microsoft's refusal to "care" about bugs and deficiencies in their software because they are too busy trying to increase their control over the wallets of the world. This wastes millions of hours of time for people all over the world who want working, quality software.

Now, the biggest problem with the proposed settlement is that Microsoft

would be donating computers *RUNNING THE WINDOWS OPERATING SYSTEM* to education. This is not a punishment! This is like a "loss leader" marketing strategy. This is how Microsoft got to where they are today. So-called charity is not the answer. If Microsoft is fined a dollar amount, they should have to pay *IN CASH*! This is only fair to the taxpayers all over the US who have been harmed by Microsoft's anti-competative practises.

Thank you,
Joshua M. Glover

CC: Dick Prosl,R. O'Neil,rodiet@wm.edu@inetgw,Paul Sou...